



# Pre - School

Infants -5 year olds

*Innovative Education Since 1984*



**Riverfield Country Day School** takes the typical Pre-School experience from ordinary to extraordinary. It is a unique experience, a place that honors and values children with a tradition of promoting creativity, investigation, and discovery in a safe, caring environment. At Riverfield, children's relationships with peers, teachers, families, the environment, and resources are key to building a firm foundation for social, emotional, intellectual, physical, and moral success.

**Children's** intellectual development is encouraged by teachers through the exploration of multiple symbolic "languages," including clay, dramatic play, construction, music, and world languages. As children explore these languages, they "discover and communicate what they know, and understand, wonder about, question, feel and imagine. In this way they make their learning visible" (Cadwell, 2003). This inquiry-based approach allows ample time for investigation and encourages the child's identity both as an individual and as part of a community.

**Teachers** facilitate the learning process, actively listening to and observing the children. Teachers then plan and scaffold short- and long-term investigations that uncover the children's ideas, hypotheses, and theories about the world around them. Teachers enable open-ended discovery and problem solving, nurture individuals and relationships, and guide and document the learning process.

**Families** are an integral part of Riverfield and their child's classroom. Family involvement is encouraged at many levels and reinforced through strong home-to-school links, including daily "Today We..." e-mails, family nights, project-culminating events, frequent dialogue, formal assessments, and conferences.

**Riverfield's environment** provides unique learning opportunities, indoors and out. Children explore the rich, 120-acre campus as they hike in the woods, investigate the barnyard and observe the seasons in our natural setting. The indoor environment is carefully designed and organized to promote investigation, discovery, imagination, creativity, and problem solving.



Riverfield takes inspiration from the philosophy and pedagogy of the schools in Reggio Emilia, Italy.

Hailed as an exemplary model of early childhood education (Newsweek, 1991), the Reggio Emilia Approach to education is committed to the creation of conditions for learning that will enhance and facilitate each child's construction of "his or her own powers of thinking through the synthesis of all the expressive, communicative and cognitive languages" (Edwards and Forman, 1993).



## Infants - 3 Year Olds

The Infants - 3s program provides abundant opportunities for active learning and is designed to develop awareness, communication skills and relationships with people, the surrounding environment, and materials.

Young children learn by actively engaging with their environment, through their senses and through social interactions. Riverfield's personalized curriculum meets the needs and interests of our rapidly developing children. Creative, discovery-based, and social play experiences establish a foundation upon which learning success is built.

### The Reggio Approach at Riverfield

Many of the most respected educators, psychologists and researchers from all over the world acknowledge that the Reggio Approach is the most exceptional example of the highest-quality early education that the world has ever seen. Riverfield is proud to be among those implementing this approach, which furthers the quality of early childhood education.

As Loris Malaguzzi, founder of the Reggio Emilia approach to early childhood education, writes in *The Hundred Languages of Children*, "The cornerstone of our experience, based on practice, theory, and research, is the image of the child as rich in resources, strong, and competent. The emphasis is placed on seeing the children as unique individuals with rights rather than simply needs".

Some distinguishing features of the Reggio Emilia schools include an Atelier, or art studio, and an Atelierista, or studio teacher; thoughtfully designed classroom environments; teachers trained in educating the whole child; the participation of families; and a commitment to research, investigation, communication, and documentation of children's work. All of these elements are integral to and embedded in Riverfield's Pre-School program, enabling children to become life-long learners engaged in joyful discovery.

### Safe, Nurturing Environment

Teachers play a vital role in the social development of young children, forming partnerships with parents to provide continuity for the child between home and school. Warm, positive, interactive relationships with adults help children develop a sense of trust in the world and a feeling of success and competence.

The sense of well-being and emotional stability fostered by Riverfield's teachers creates a secure setting in which children learn and thrive. This sense of security and trust supports children's growing independence as they learn self-help skills such as feeding, hand-washing, dressing, and toileting.

### A Day in the Life ...

Each day offers children time for investigation and self-selected play. Classrooms are extended to include other spaces like the mini-ateliers (art studios) for hands-on learning and expressive development, the library for research and language development, and the Commons, Multi-Purpose Room, and playgrounds for large motor and social development. Our outdoor environment, including nature trails and the barnyard, provides frequent on-campus field trip experiences for even the youngest children.

### Short & Long Term Investigations

Project work is introduced through exploration of concepts and materials. It is supported by interactive learning centers in the classroom, the mini-ateliers, and throughout Riverfield's country campus. Attention is continually given to building relationships, to broadening children's communication skills, and to understanding self and the community in which they live.





### 3 - 5 Year Olds

The environment for 3-5 year olds is carefully planned to create beauty and meaning, invite play and discovery, and provoke inquiry and investigation. It naturally fosters small group collaboration and social interaction, encourages communication, and helps children construct relationships for learning. Interactive learning centers expand at this age level to provide meaningful and relevant avenues for emerging social, emotional, physical, and academic fundamentals. Riverfield’s country campus further supports children’s learning as outdoor investigations become more in-depth and basic scientific knowledge takes root.

### Atelier - The Art Studio

The art studio, or Atelier, is alive with creativity. Experiences in the Atelier complement classroom projects, introduce new materials, create social encounters, and motivate children to represent and communicate their thoughts, feelings, and understandings of the world around them.

### Short & Long Term Investigations

Projects encompass core critical thinking in the math, science, literacy, and social studies curriculum by integrating them with practical, real-world applications. Children collaborate in the planning of each project, helping to determine the direction, materials, documentation, and communication of the process. The children’s learning is made visible through written documentation, recordings, photographs, displays, sketches, and project work culminating in a rich, comprehensive, and joyful learning process.

### Field Trips

Weekly field trips supplement the school environment. Museums, parks, merchants, restaurants, and homes of children provide first-hand experiences in a broad, relevant context and lay a foundation for comprehension of the world in which the children live.

### Multi-Age Classrooms

Children typically spend two years in the same classroom, allowing for continuity, strong relationships, and development of leadership skills. The mixed age groupings in each class invite and enable mentoring and cooperative relationships and allow teachers to personalize curriculum and support appropriate developmental growth.



## RIVERFIELD IS BEAUTIFUL...

“All of the children laughing - that is beautiful.”

“The barnyard! Now that is beautiful!!  
Stinky - but beautiful.”

“It has friendships and friendships are beautiful.”



## MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Riverfield Country Day School is to provide an excellent education in a family-oriented atmosphere. Students are motivated and encouraged to learn, develop, and mature in a respectful, secure, and diverse environment. A caring, creative faculty and a challenging, integrated, and personalized curriculum promote the development of the whole student as a confident and responsible learner prepared for success today and tomorrow.

### Curriculum Overview

#### SKILL

##### Social & Emotional Growth

Life skills and social development are integrated throughout the curriculum by

- building self-esteem
- communication
- collaboration
- confidence
- independence
- imagination
- participation
- planning
- problem-solving
- responsibility
- sharing

##### Literacy

Teachers and peers help children's language development by



- modeling appropriate speech
- teaching and using verbal and sign language to communicate needs
- reading and exposing the child to literature every day
- naming objects and actions to develop vocabulary and context, beginning in English and progressing to include Spanish
- singing songs and strengthening language through music and movement activities
- using open-ended questions to promote thought and problem solving
- playing rhyming, name, and word games to introduce and strengthen phonemic awareness, letter recognition, and letter sounds
- using writing centers to introduce written language including the child's name, names of friends, and words relevant to the child
- making books and dictating stories

##### Math

Math concepts and skills (based on NCTM\*) include

- 2D and 3D shapes, sizes, and spatial relationships.
- counting, estimating, comparing (greater than, less than, equal to), and weighing
- sorting, categorizing, patterning, and graphing
- numbers, numerals, math symbols, and quantity
- beginning addition and subtraction concepts through interactive games and activities



\* National Council of Teachers of Mathematics

##### Science

Science concepts are developed by responding to children's interest in scientific phenomena. Children can discover



- light, shadow, transparency, color, size, and projection using sensory tables, light tables, and overhead projectors
- chemistry concepts when cooking to explore, measure, and pour
- foundations of botany, zoology, and ecology when observing plants and animals and actively exploring of our 120-acre country campus, including banyard, and nature trails

##### Social Studies

Social studies focuses on



- celebrating families, cultures, and traditions
- valuing each child, individually and as a member of a group
- fostering an appreciation of multi-cultural art, music, and literature
- exploring geography and world awareness through mapping and culture studies

##### Creative Arts

Creative arts support the curriculum by

- offering hands-on experiences with high quality media such as clay, weaving, paint, wire, sketching, dance, music, collage, and photography



## RIVERFIELD ADMISSIONS

### Accreditation & Licensing

Riverfield prides itself in being the first Tulsa school accredited by the National Association of Early Childhood programs, a division of NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children). Riverfield is accredited by ISAS (the Independent Schools Association of the Southwest) and is also licensed by the Division of Human Services for the state of Oklahoma.

### Admissions Process

Pre-School is available in two-, three-, or five-day programs. Children are placed developmentally in Infants-5s classrooms. Infants must be 8 weeks of age by September 1 to begin school. The main enrollment phase occurs in the spring when enrollment is processed for summer and the upcoming school year. After re-enrollment by current Riverfield families, available spaces are filled from the waiting list. Families are placed on the waiting list by completing a waiting list form and paying a portion of the registration fee. Families are called in priority order by date received to fill available spaces. Occasionally, spaces open up during the year that will be filled from the waiting list.

## CONTACTS

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## NON-DISCRIMINATORY STATEMENT

Riverfield Country Day School is a non-profit, independent school with no religious affiliation. Riverfield is a welcoming community that strives to treat everyone fairly. All decisions regarding admissions, employment, administration, and student and faculty life are made without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, ethnicity, age, disability, gender, sexual orientation, marital or family status, or any other criteria prohibited by law. All rights, privileges, educational, athletic, school-administrated programs, and activities made available by the school are extended to all students, families, faculty, and staff.